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CONFERENCE *connection*

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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 1, 2019

Thoughts about the Recent UMC Conference

Grace and peace! Many of us have been watching the information dispersed from the Special Conference of the United Methodist Church this past week. We have been listening to our UMC friends and their emotions as debates occurred concerning the ordination of LGBTQ clergy and same-sex marriage. Although there are still some processes to occur through the UMC system, the stance of the international body has basically not changed. We, in the UCC, know the pain of disagreements. We know what it is like to strongly voice our diverse viewpoints, while each one feels that they are remaining true to scripture.



The UMC organization/system is very different from our own. In the UCC, local congregations and associations have the responsibility of making decisions that affect ordination and theological understandings. This is not so in the UMC. In addition, the UMC is also international, involving other countries and cultures.

It is important at this time that we keep our brothers and sisters of the UMC in prayer: be witnesses to the love of God; listen to their anger, grief and disappointment; provide a safe space for individuals to share and just be in the comfort of God's people.

There may be some individuals who seek to find a new church home. If so, welcome them, but also respect that they need time to grieve and heal. It can be like leaving a family – it is difficult and time is needed prior to

embracing a new one. But, like many of us, other of our UMC friends will want to continue to influence their current denomination to change. And we can encourage them to do that.

God calls all of us in our faith journey to keep open and moving in ways that follow the love of Jesus the Christ. Our understandings change over time. Even in the UCC where we have stated that all are welcome, we keep growing in our understanding what that means in our daily lives. We are not perfect, but we keep working on it.

Thank you for your care and concern for others as we all seek to be faithful.

Blessings, Char

News from the Conference Office



"Coffee with Char"

Thank you to those authorized ministers who joined in the "Coffee with Char" conversations that occurred online this past week. It was a wonderful way for people to connect and meet new people! I greatly appreciated our conversations as participants shared their perceptions of the Southeast Conference and made suggestions to consider as we move forward. Some of what I learned will appear in future reflections! We will continue to explore ways to connect through technology and hope that even more folks will be involved. So... keep alert to the Conference Connections and Facebook page for the next opportunity! Blessings! Char



Caring Community

Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2019. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

Week of March 4

- United Church of Cookeville; Cookeville, Tennessee
- PATHWAYS Theological Education Program
- Roy Bain
- Douglas Farmer
- Vant Hardaway
- David Speno

Week of March 11

- Rehoboth Fellowship; Atlanta, Georgia
- UCC National Staff and Collegium
- Valerie Coe Lowder
- Kriss (Mi Young) Choi
- Timothy Garvin-Leighton
- James Janecek

In Our Prayers

- Valerie Coe Lowder and her family
- Sonya Williams
- Our siblings in the United Methodist Church

Churches in Transition

Central Congregational, Atlanta, GA; United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville AL; First Congregational, Birmingham AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta GA; First Congregational Christian, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Peace Church, Clemson SC

From the Generosity Coordinator

This is a gentle reminder that the Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives Grant Cycle one, 2019 ends March 7, 2019. Please review the guidelines and try and have all materials submitted by the deadline date.

OCWM is the shared funds of the United Church of Christ that makes all that we do in the Southeast Conference, national and global levels possible. And it starts with our local congregation! We need your continued support.



When you see the prophetic work of the United Church of Christ around social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally, that is your OCWM dollars at work. Let's come together and dialogue.. let's discuss new and innovative ways to continue to be a critical presence in places of undeniable need.

We appreciate your support of this conference and all the ways you continue to be a blessing. Please continue to invite me to your churches. Should you have questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me.

Blessings as we continue to journey...together,
Min. Carrole Moss

Winter 2019 Grant Applications Due by March 7!

In July 2009, we launched the **Transforming Churches - Transforming Lives** campaign with the goal of raising money that would help carry the Southeast Conference into a new phase of growth and renewal, building on the remarkable progress achieved during the prior decade. For the last number of years we have been in the distribution of funds phase of the campaign.



Transforming Churches • Transforming Lives
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

For the Winter 2019 grant cycle we began accepting applications on January 17, 2019 for grants. **This cycle will end March 7, 2019.** There are a few steps to keep in mind before applying:

- If you **have been awarded a grant in the past**, please make sure your "Project Evaluation Form" has been completed and submitted. This form can be [found on our website](#). This is necessary and needed before your application can be considered.
- Please read and [follow the guidelines](#) (these can be found on the application form).
- **A detailed budget** should be submitted with the application. This is most important.
- If at all possible, please submit your application **before the deadline date**. That allows for any questions or concerns to be addressed prior to the deadline.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Generosity Coordinator Carrole Moss at cmoss@secucc.org.

Mandatory Annual Authorized Minister Review

As a reminder, it's time once again for the **Yearly Information Review for All Authorized Ministers** in the Southeast Conference. You can either [fill out the form online here](#) or you can [download and print the form here](#) and mail it to the Southeast Conference, PO Box 1950, Decatur GA 30031.

2019 Annual Meeting



That We May All Be One

Southeast Conference Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 30 to Sunday, June 2

Pleasant Hill Community Church, Tennessee

More details coming very soon!

Expo at Annual Meeting

Calling all people, businesses, or UCC affiliated entities that would like to have a table at the Expo at the Southeast Conference's Annual Meeting May 30th- June 1st. This year we are opening up our Expo to crafters and non-profits as well as UCC affiliated entities.

- Have you written a book?
- Does your church sell Fair Trade items?
- Do you make stoles?
- Design websites for churches and non-profits?
- Offer educational opportunities for clergy or lay leadership?

A table at the Expo might be for you! If you are interested in reserving a table, please contact email Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org.

Announcements in Annual Meeting Program

We will again have the opportunity for churches and UCC affiliated ministries to have announcements or ads in the Annual Meeting booklet for Annual Meeting 2019. Is there an event coming up your church would like to invite the conference to? A special celebration to lift up? Announcements cost \$25 for a quarter page, \$50 for a half page, and \$100 for a full page.

Discounts available based on church size. Please email Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org for more details.

News from the Wider Church

An Open Letter to the United Methodist Church

The Executive Leadership of the United Church of Christ holds the United Methodist Church in prayer and offers love and solidarity to all who follow Jesus. [Read the letter.](#)



One Great Hour of Sharing is March 31; Plan Now!

One Great Hour of Sharing® is the Lenten Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports disaster, refugee, and development activities. The suggested offering date for the One Great Hour of Sharing offering is March 31, 2019. The UCC is offering a 2019 Planning and Resource Guide, which

includes a OGHS Video Library, Weekly Preaching Notes from Lectionary, Sermon Starter, Offering Reminders, Worship Resources, Bulletin Inserts, Mission Moments, Childrens Sermons and Activities, Youth Activities, Sharing Calendar and Instructions, Sharing Calendar B&W, and Downloadable Art and Images. [Visit the UCC website for details.](#)

National Office Young Adult Service Communities & Summer Communities Programs for 2019-2020

The UCC Humanitarian & Development Team is offering two opportunities for community service.

- [Young Adult Service Communities](#) (YASC) are unique opportunities for you to live in intentional community with others who share your commitment to service and social justice. Young Adult Service Communities are leadership programs for young adults aged 21-35.
- [Summer Communities of Service](#) (SCOS) is a leadership program for young adults aged 19 and above. Summer Communities focuses on intersecting faith communities, service and justice advocacy. Sites for summer 2019 include Charlotte, Texas, Manhattan, Montana, Kansas City, Daytona, and Philadelphia.

Both programs are still accepting applications. Each program provides an opportunity to travel, receive loan assistance, internship credit, leadership training, networking and serve in intentional community. [Learn more on the UCC website.](#)



Lent Yard Signs and Images from the UCC

Display this 18"x24" plastic lawn sign in your church's front yard, on the side of your building or wherever you see fit to share in Lent and proclaim to your neighbors that Christ has Risen. This is a simple reminder that God gave the world Jesus and Jesus gave us his life is always in order, but it's especially important in Lent. Set up this sign outside to be a reminder of God's love for us throughout this Lenten season and post perfectly-sized images to social media to extend grace and peace online! [Learn more](#).

News from Our Local Congregations



Come Out Mobile: A Night of Unity

In 2015, Open Table United Church of Christ in Mobile, AL, with partial funding from a Neighbors in Need grant, founded a support group for LGBTQ teens known now as Prism. As we hoped, those beyond our small church came to value and lend support to this service to LGBTQ youth, making it possible for our work to be financially sustainable and in fact to allow us to expand our services.

Open Table continues to provide key financial support and leadership, but we are grateful that Prism has now attained 501(c)3 status, and local supporters of Prism have offered to lead in our first major fundraiser, "Come Out Mobile: A Night of Unity." Scheduled for April 13, the elegant event will take place at the historic Ezell House and feature a cocktail hour, a silent auction, and plated dinner accompanied by live entertainment.



UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat

Save the date for the biennial Southern Region Women's Retreat, October 18 - 20, 2019. Come and experience Spiritual Renewal through Worship, Bible Study, Music, Workshops, Service Projects, Sightseeing, Sisterhood, Good Food, Love, Peace, and Joy. The theme is "Strong Sisters' Stories." This event is for lay and clergy women of UCC Conferences: Florida, Southeast, South Central, and Southern. This event to be hosted by women from UCC Southern Conference. For questions, contact our Southeast Conference representative, Rev. Clarice Mitchell from Pleasant Hill Community Church.

Save the date! Annual Retired Servants Retreat

This year's Annual Retreat for Retirees and Spouses/Guests of Clergy, Missionaries, Volunteer Workers, Chaplains and Spouses of the United Church of Christ Southeast and Southern Conferences will be held October 6-9, 2019, at Blowing Rock Conference Center, Blowing Rock, NC.

2019 Planning Team

UCC from Southeast Conference Area:

- Rev. Clarice Mitchell, Pleasant Hill TN, clamit@aol.com
- Rev. Clara Benson, Goose Creek SC, revclara.ret@gmail.com
- Rev. Trish Greeves, Roswell GA, trishgreeves@me.com
- Dr. Ed Olson, Pleasant Hill TN, Edeole59@gmail.com

UCC from Southern Conference Area:

- Coordinator Rev. Larry Bolick, Salisbury NC, Lawrence.Bolick1@outlook.com
- Rev. Wayne & Judy Gardner, Suffolk VA, wagardner@verizon.net
- Bonita Hooper, Lexington NC, bonitahooper@gmail.com
- Janelle Bunn, Lexington NC, Janneybunn15@gmail.com
- Rev. C. L. "Curley" Stumb, Blowing Rock NC, stumb@boone.net

Call BRCC Amy Stamey at 828-295-7813 for reservations/questions.



Musicians with a Mission to support Back Bay Mission

Back Bay Mission annual fundraiser, Musicians with a Mission, will be held Tuesday, April 2, 2019. The evening will include entertainment from Anderson Domingues, hors d'oeuvres, Spin 2 Win, and a silent auction. All money raised will be used to build a stronger community through the programs at Back Bay Mission. Location: White House Hotel. Tickets will be \$50. For sponsorship information or to secure your tickets please contact Laura Payne, lpayne@thebackbaymission.org or 228-432-0301

Holy Trinity Community Church Presents "People Who Need People"

With singer and celebrity impersonator

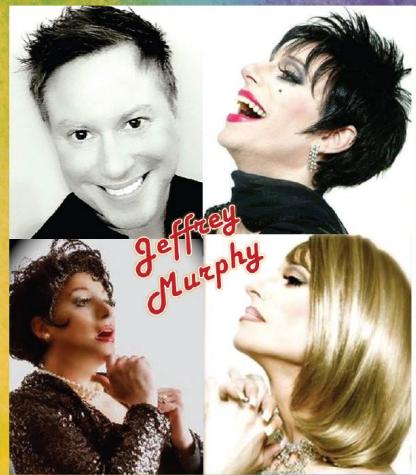
Jeffery Murphy

Friday, March 29th 8:00 PM

**Free-Will Offering Donations will proceed our
Room in the Inn and PRIDE ministries**

"No matter WHO you ARE, or WHERE you are on your journey,
you are welcome HERE!"

www.htccnashville.com or 615.352.3838 for details



Join Holy Trinity Community Church in Nashville on Friday, March 29 at 8 pm for a fun time of food, entertainment and education as they raise money for their social justice ministries. A free-will offering will be taken and a silent service auction will be sure to inspire!

We love sharing news from our local congregations! Please send us pictures and explanations of special events at your church that we can share on our website, social media, and in this email newsletter. We think it's a great way to share ideas for events, as well as celebrating what other UCC churches are doing!

Email us at communications@secucc.org.

Training and Learning Opportunities

UCC High School Youth Work Camp in Cuba

The UCC and the Southeast Conference, through Pleasant Hill Community Church, have had a long mission relationship with partner churches in Cuba. As a part of that partnership, there will be a trip this July for UCC youth and adult chaperones led by Kim Miller. Kim has led a number of these trips in the past. There will be opportunities to be a part of a work camp with our partner the Lavastida Center in Santiago de Cuba, fellowship with Cuban youth, and opportunities to become acquainted with Cuba and its culture. [Learn more on our website.](#)

UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat

Save the Date: October 18-20, 2019 - The 2019 biennial UCC Southern

Region Women's Retreat (SRWR) will be hosted by the Church Women of the Southern Conference (CWSC) at Blowing Rock Conference Center (BRCC) in Blowing Rock, NC. This retreat is open to lay and clergy women from the following UCC Conferences: Southern, Florida, South Central and Southeast. Please mark your calendars now...more information to come later this year! (Clarice Mitchell of Pleasant Hill Community Church now serves as Southeast Conference representative on this planning team. Clarice replaces Mary Ruth who served 2012-2017).

PATHWAYS Spring and Summer Courses

PATHWAYS Theological Education has announced courses for Spring and Summer 2019. They include:

- L3.6 Professional Boundaries and Ministerial Self-Care (Feb 27-Apr 9)
- L1.4 The Stories of Christian Saints and Sinners (Mar 6-Apr 16)
- L1.5 Spiritual Care of Self and Others (May 1-Jun 11)
- L2.4 New Testament Hermeneutics (May 1 - June 11)
- L2.6/L2.7 UCC History & Polity (May 1 - July 20)

[Visit our website for more details.](#)

New Story Festival in Austin, TX

You're invited to a new annual gathering for community, creativity, and the common good, launching in Austin, Texas, on March 29-31, 2019. The [New Story Festival](#) is a bold experiment for a better world, embodying imagination, spirituality, social action, and playful connection - defined above all by the practice of love. The world runs on stories – the narratives that fuel the ways we live in this world and relate to one another. Our stories can liberate or oppress, encourage reconciliation or further separation, inspire new life or even bring death. But when we become conscious of our stories, we can begin to change them. For more information, contact Ginnie Ferrell at ginnieferrell@gmail.com.

Job Openings

Pilgrim Church in Chattanooga Seeks Music Director

Pilgrim Congregational Church seeks a new director of music. The music

director:

- plays piano and/or organ in Sunday morning services (and occasional extra services such as weddings, funerals, and special events),
- directs the church choir, including rehearsals and Sunday morning warm-up
- and coordinates with church ministers and other worship leaders regarding the selection and preparation of music for the services.

Our ideal candidate is familiar with a diverse range of musical styles. As choir director, we especially seek someone who will go beyond helping people master notes and technical proficiency to include expressing rich musicality and enhancing the musical experience of both the singers and the congregation. Minimum salary is \$10,000 annually, commensurate with experience. [Download the full description and contact info.](#)

Conference Calendar

Annual Meeting Planning Session

March 12 @ 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

March 14 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Staff Meeting

March 26 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting

April 4 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Upper Room UCC Fellowship

May 18 @ 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm CDT
Howard Congregational Church, Nashville

Boundary Training

May 29 @ 1:00 pm - 8:00 pm CDT

Pleasant Hill Community Church

MID Retreat

May 30 @ 10:00 am - May 31 @ 12:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

SEC UCC Annual Meeting

May 31 @ 12:00 pm - June 1 @ 4:00 pm EDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

UCC General Synod

June 21 - June 25
Milwaukee, WI

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